

Minutes of KARO-ECHO (KE) meeting, December 11, 2017

Attendees: Hal Grabske, Larry Nagel, Texx Woodworth, Don Simon, Jamuel Starkey, Marian Gade, Jerry Michaels, Marlene Keller

1. **November 11, 2017 Minutes:** Reviewed and approved.

**2. Proposed Constitution:**

Discussion:

Don studied a number of constitutions in the North Bay radio groups and came to the conclusion that two of the most relevant examples were NALCO and EBARC. NALCO(focused on emergency services) and EBARC (a ham club) have a clear idea of their purpose and operate meetings effectively--and that helps them get and keep members. Don prepared a simplified version of the NALCO bylaws and has brought it forward with the goal to describe our purpose, give us a more effective and efficient operational structure and motivate new hams to join us.

Marian Gade & Jerry Michaels passed out a handout entitled "Notes on the Constitution" indicating that the proposed Constitution described a structure larger and more encompassing than they wanted. They indicated that they might join the new KE, but did not plan to attend meetings or be active in work groups. Marian asked that the draft Constitution be modified to eliminate "radio" since ECHO stands for "El Cerrito Ham Operators" and not "El Cerrito Ham Radio Operators." Also, she said the Constitution did not need to say KE would be a nonprofit, since she believed we would not be incorporating.

Larry Nagel and Marlene Keller recommended that the document be re-titled By-Laws since it was not a constitution. Texx Woodworth asked that we then delete the word "radio" from the ECHO name and change all text references from "constitution" to "by-laws."

There was agreement on most that such a document was needed, and altho this version, simplified from the NALCO version, was as Marian noted, a major enhancement of the original K-E mission and operation, it does represent an appropriate goal for our future - much expanded KARO-ECHO organization that we intend to create.

By vote, the By-Laws were approved as amended per Texx's comments. 5 Yes, 1 No (Marian, 1 abstain = Jerry).

Action item: Hal and Don to revise the By-Laws document as approved and

distribute the final version to all members of KARO-ECHO.

### **3. Issues around alerting and activation procedures we will use:**

Discussion:

We believe there are 3 levels of emergencies: 1) an immediate evacuation (e.g. wildfire); 2) a developing emergency, requiring shelter in place(e.g.major toxic release) and 3) a disaster creating a range of infrastructure and personal damage (e.g. earthquake) where many may stay in or near their residences possibly for an extended period (days). We see value in explaining how and when KE would receive alerts and activate (or not) under these scenarios.

The primary task of the ham emergency communication net is to connect all the CERT areas to the EOC in El Cerrito. One concern was what we work KE hams would do if the EOC is not yet activated. (After the meeting the EC Fire Chief reported that the EOC will be staffed with or without hams). KE members suggested that while a Level 1 emergency would mean we all evacuate, Level 2 and 3 emergencies could mean the self-activation of our ham resource net, with hams coming up onto the resource net and sharing information with one another. Under this situation, hams would also be hearing information from the CERT block organizations and area coordinators. Thus, this information exchange would include hams helping relay messages as within a CERT area and between CERT areas in both Kensington and El Cerrito.

The previous emergency communication exercises and drills have used the ECK Fire stations as relay points for the CERT areas. These fire stations all have operational ham radio sets kept in good operating condition, and performed their task in the drills. Don Simon noted an alternative approach that does not use these stations as relays but to have all the 17 CERT areas connect directly to the EOC. This would use ham operators at each Area ICP and instead have hand-held, mobile operations setups talking directly to the EOC. This has opened the opportunity for us to review as a group what the options are for CERT communicating with the EOC and how we might proceed to make these operational. In either case we would need hams for all CERT areas and then maybe 3 or 4 more to staff the EOC and Fire Station radios. This makes recruiting a critical element. Another element needing study is alerting and activation (which was a serious problem in the recent very fast-moving Napa/Sonoma wildfires). There are web-based systems (Nixle, Pulse point, Google Crisis), landlines (reverse 911), street level (police/fire with loudspeakers and knocking on doors), sirens, and emergency radio nets. Some of these may be damaged/eliminated by the level and type of disaster - so we need to think where ham radio can be set to be best useful.

Conclusion: We need to hear from B/C Janes about the process of EOC activation

and to understand and practice (with frequent drills) our self-activation. And to understand how the Fire Stations would figure in our message handling system.

**4. Issues around how we explore the siting, setup, maintenance and operation of EmComm stations in El Cerrito/Kensington:**

Members feel that we need to take B/C Janes up on his offer to let us tour the Fire Station and EC city ham locations. There are also some CERT Areas with some form of ham emcomm capabilities (we think these would include EC9, EC1, K6 and perhaps others). We need to look at what is being done by the active ham groups and see what might be done to expand and connect these efforts.

**5. Net Control Operational training and drills:**

Discussion and action items:

Members agreed that there was value in using the long-established Thursday night KARO-ECHO call in to carry out a number of emcomm activities on the air, both to build our skills and to make the larger ham community in ECK aware that KARO-ECHO is now becoming much more active. A high priority would be to practice net control skills and then add various drills and training in message handling. The idea could be we continue the roster call-in at its usual time and frequency and when this is complete add this emcomm practice/training session immediately after.

Several members (Don, Texx and Marlene) stressed the value of using CERT/ICS forms (on damage assessment and messages) in drills. Larry discussed with value of digital forms (which Richmond and CCC OES use). Members noted that pen to paper would be necessary if the internet is down or ICP had to be mobile.

Marlene will pdf CERT forms to Don/Hal and provide them with the Net Control class info/practice exercises from a recent CERT Martinez class she attended (taught by ham operator & CERT certified Kevin Slosnik KS4FUN).